

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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In Reply Refer To:
4100/9210 (931) P

October 10, 2007

EMS TRANSMISSION 10/10/2007
Instruction Memorandum No. ID-2008-002
Expires: 09/30/09

To: ILT

From: State Director

Subject: Post Fire Livestock Grazing Management

Program Area: Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) clarifies the expectation for addressing livestock grazing management as it relates to post fire recovery activities in accordance with Departmental and Bureau policy, the applicable Land Use Plans (LUP), and within the analysis of the Environmental Assessments (EAs) prepared for the Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plans (NFRPs) in Idaho.

Policy/Action: Implementing a livestock closure following a wildfire must follow national policy and guidance, and be consistent with the applicable LUP.

Timeframe: This IM is effective immediately.

Budget Impact: No overall budget impact is expected.

Background: The BLM's policy H-1742-1: Burned Area Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Handbook states:

"Livestock are to be excluded from burned areas until monitoring results, documented in writing, show emergency stabilization and rehabilitation objectives have been met. Objectives must be clearly defined in the Emergency Stabilization and/or Burned Area Rehabilitation Plan. Before livestock grazing can resume, monitoring must show that objectives have been met. In the case of treatment failure, other factors may need to be considered."

During 2004, updated NFRPs were prepared for the three southern districts in Idaho. While these plans and their associated EAs were being prepared, the previous BLM Handbook

H-1742-1 stated the following as policy:

“Revegetated areas and areas that have been burned but not revegetated will be closed to livestock grazing for at least two growing seasons following the season in which the wildfire occurred to promote recovery of burned perennial plants and/or facilitate the establishment of seeded species... Livestock closures for less than two growing seasons may be justified, on a case-by-case basis, based on sound resource data and experience.”

Since the policy regarding livestock closures was undergoing revision while the NFRPs were being updated, these plans did not use consistent or clear wording in regard to a livestock closure.

The purpose of this IM is to clarify the requirements regarding livestock closure with the following guidance:

- The need for livestock closures following wildfire will be determined during the preparation of site-specific Emergency Stabilization (ES) Plans and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) Plans. Areas to be closed or not closed will be determined based on an assessment of the effects of the wildfire and identified in the ES and/or BAR plans.
- Livestock closures must be consistent with the applicable LUP. Some LUPs have more specific guidance than is stated in the Handbook.
- Closed areas are closed until resource objectives have been met, or as required in the unit’s LUP.

In summary, the appropriate approach to management of livestock grazing is to ensure monitoring objectives have been met as per the LUPs, the NFRP EA, and in accordance with applicable policy and guidance.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: Department of Interior-Interagency Burned Area Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Handbook (Manual 620-DM Chapter 3) and the BLM Supplemental ESR Handbook 1742-1.

Coordination: This IM was coordinated within the Division of Resource Services and the Branch of Resources and Sciences.

Contact: Sharon Paris, Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation State Program Lead, (208) 373-4028 or Tom Miles, Rangeland Management Specialist, (208) 373-3804.

Boise District with Union: Management is reminded to notify and satisfy any bargaining requirements prior to implementation.

Signed by:
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